

# “HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN!”

GENESIS 3:4-6

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## INTRODUCTION

Adam was the mightiest being created and put on this Earth! He was made “a little lower than God/the angels.” He was “crowned with glory and majesty.” God made him “to rule over the works of His hands; God put “all things under his feet” (Psalm 8:5-6). He was to reproduce and multiply and fill the Earth. What higher dignity could man ask for; what greater majesty?

Later in the days of David, God’s anointed one bewailed the fall of Saul and his sons—especially Jonathan. Saul had been given every advantage and was made Israel’s first king. Yet, he disobeyed and displeased God and eventually fell in battle against the Philistines. At the time of his death David bewailed the great and tragic loss:

**“HOW HAVE THE MIGHTY FALLEN, AND THE WEAPONS OF WAR PERISHED!”** (II Sam. 1:19, 27)

But, as tragic as was the fall of Saul, it does not “hold a candle” in comparison with the fall of Adam and Eve. Paul points out that the Fall of Adam brought the downfall and ruination of all of creation:

“For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope....The whole creation groans and suffers the pains of child-birth together until now” (Rom. 8:20, 22).

In the last message we noted the initial approach of Satan to Eve and how the process of Eve’s weakening toward temptation had begun. In this message we see the culmination of the temptation in the Fall of man.

## SIN HAS CONSEQUENCES—ALWAYS MUCH GREATER THAN THE INDIVIDUAL CAN IMAGINE!

### I. THE STATEMENT BY THE SERPENT (4-5)

- Notice how these temptations center around the Word of God.
- This is still the center of the battleground today!
- Be on the alert for suggestions contrary to God’s Word!
- **How easy it is to exaggerate the magnitude and the inconvenience of some command of God when we don’t want to obey it!**

We try to diminish its importance and its penalty [family altar; quiet time; witnessing; church attendance, etc.]

#### A. The Serpent’s denial of God’s Justice (4)

- Not, “Ye shall not surely die”; not strong enough
- Rather, “You certainly shall not die [the negative precedes the inf. abs. & verb—very strong emphasis].
- Note that the doctrine of judgment was the first doctrine to be denied—it is still denied by most people today!
- *Can a loving God send people to hell?*

#### B. The Serpent’s denial of God’s Holiness (5)

- He attributes envy to God, and selfishness.

- God deliberately withholds good from His creatures and keeps it for Himself.
- 1. God “knew all along” [Qal participle]—continuous knowledge
- 2. “On the day you eat from it” —i.e. “as soon”
- 3. “Your eyes will be opened—i.e. you will learn something new, not previously noticed.
  - Satan’s deception here is found in that **he does not indicate what this involves!**
- 4. “You will become like God”—rather than “like gods”; there is only one God.
  - Satan seeks to motivate pride in the woman; these are the same kinds of goals found in the false cults!
- 5. “Knowing good and evil.”
  - Man would have learned this if they had resisted temptation!
  - Satan refers to the intimate, personal relation with evil by experience, which **God never intended for man.**
  - But, Satan hid this in a half-truth.
  - God can have intimate, personal knowledge of evil without being part of it; man cannot.
  - God is omniscient and omnipresent.
  - **In striving to become like God, man really tried to make God like man, to lower God to his own human level.**
  - SATAN TRIES TO GET EVE TO THINK THAT HER HOLINESS IS AS INVIOABLE AS GOD’S, OR THAT GOD’S IS AS FLEXIBLE AS HERS [says the same thing].

We need to ask ourselves: “How have I yielded to Satan’s subtle deceptions?”

Notice the tangle of truth and falsehood!

## II. THE FALL (6)—see I Jn. 2:16

### A. Eve’s Sin: “She took from its fruit and ate.”

1. “The Lust of the Flesh”—physical perversion—“The woman saw that the tree was good for food.” God should not have withheld this tree if God were truly good!
2. “The Lust of the Eyes”—emotional perversion—“It was a delight to the eyes.”
  - No danger or death was lurking; God won’t punish, at least not severely!
  - Aesthetic appeal—but it is really **covetousness and greed.**
  - How often that which is “aesthetic” is really “the lust of the eyes.”
3. “The Pride of Life”—intellectual perversion—“The tree was desirable to make one wise”
4. “**She took from the fruit and ate.**”
  - *Have such catastrophic words ever been spoken?*
  - With what simplified language the Fall is described! But, what devastating results!
  - The eating was the outward evidence of the inward fall.
  - **Unbelief, Doubt, and pride** were the roots of her sin; *the same is true today.*
  - **Eve chose to believe the “creature, rather than the Creator;** how foolish!
  - **She believed him!!**

[QUOTE PEMBER, P. 131]

### B. Adam’s Sin: “She gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.” [Again, briefly related]

1. Likely she presented to Adam the same arguments given to her.
2. Plus, “I ate, and I am still alive; I’m OK!”

- Note “with her.” These words are first found at this place and likely show that **he had just joined her**.
- Adam did not sin from a sense of chivalry, as Milton suggests!
- I Tim. 2:14 simply shows that Eve was the first to be deceived and to sin.
- Their guilt is really the same; however, Adam was the **head of the race**, and really gets the brunt of the blame.
- See Rom. 5:14—death reigned from Adam to Moses—Adam’s transgression.
- See I Cor. 15:22—“As in Adam all die; so in Christ shall all be made alive.”
- His sin brought the final ruin.

### III. MAN’S FALLEN CONDITION (Romans 1:18-32)

- A. Men know the truth, but suppress it (18).
- B. God manifests himself through direct revelation [originally], conscience, and nature.
  1. He makes Himself evident to men (v. 19), then makes nature as open evidence of such (v. 20).
  2. Man’s state is not ignorance, but knowledge; he lives in **darkness** rather than **light**.
- C. Man has not glorified God as God, or given thanks to Him (21).
- D. Intellectual vanity and futility is the result; men became fools (22).
- E. Then men attempted to make God like himself, and after their imagination (23).
- F. Such leads to degrading passions (24-32).
- G. Men ignore the fact of judgment (32).

### IV. THREE ELEMENTS OF DENIAL IN THE TEMPTATION AND THE FALL

- A. God’s Goodness
  1. Man claims God’s gifts as his right.
  2. Man questions God’s liberality.
  3. Man resents God’s restrictions.
  4. **What pride!**
- B. God’s Justice
  1. Question of its equity.
  2. Dispute its truth.
  3. **What presumption!**
- C. God’s Holiness
  1. Cannot man do as God does?
  2. Should God have more than he does?
  3. Man can be as God.
  4. **What profanity!**

*Satan blinds the minds of man—II Cor. 4:6.*

### V. THE SOLUTION: THE DEATH OF CHRIST

- A. God’s Goodness—He gives His only begotten Son.
- B. God’s Justice—He condemns sin in His Son.
- C. God’s Holiness—He hides His face from His Son.

*We must know evil as Christ did on the cross and die to it! Then, we can live unto God.*

D. Christ was the Second Adam

1. He was tempted in all points as we are—yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).  
Example: Luke 4:1-12 in the wilderness of Judea by Satan
  - a. The Lust of the flesh—turn the stones to bread (4:3-4).
  - b. The lust of the eyes—accept all the kingdoms of the world (4:5-8)
  - c. The pride of life—jump from the pinnacle of the temple (4:9-12).
2. Jesus overcame the wicked one (I John 2:13-14).

CONCLUSION

Let us stick to “the simplicity in Christ” —Read II Cor. 11:3:

The simplicity of faith, not the *subtlety of unbelief*.

The simplicity of a little child, not the *proud understanding of a perverse heart*.

Men want to be “more round-about” with God; they want to make more ado!

- Add self-righteousness and good works.
- God comes to be a hard Master, yet a lenient judge.

Stick to the simplicity found in Christ!

Do you know Him?

Know evil as Christ did; **Die to evil!**